

Forest Management Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary
April 5, 2006
1:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
USDA Forest Service, St. Ignace Ranger District Office
1798 West US 2, St. Ignace, MI

Attendees:

FMAC Members: Joel Blohm, Bill Bobier, Lynne Boyd, Bill Cook, Peg Gale, Susan Holben, Des Jones, Dan Keathley, Warren Suchovsky, Erin McDonough (MUCC Delegate), Steve Shine (MDA Delegate), Leanne Marten (Forest Service committee advisor), Kerry Gray (staff support).

Frank Ruswick participated in the GAFMPs discussion via conference call

Steven Arwood, Leland Crawford, Thomas Dunn, John Fowler, Mark Janke, William Manson, Anne Woiwode were absent.

Other Attendees: David Wright (Michigan Forest Association)

Welcome

Lynne Boyd welcomed FMAC members and guests.

Lynne apologized for having the cancel field trip prior to meeting but field conditions were not good for visiting the DNR's factor limited sites. The field trip will be rescheduled.

Lynne announced that FMAC member John Fowler has resigned from the committee due to other demands on his time. He wishes the committee luck on their assignments.

Additions to the agenda: Bill Cook announcement

Meeting Summary

Warren Suchovsky motioned to approve March 8 FMAC meeting summary. Dan Keathley seconded.

Right to Forest Legislation -Working Group Updates

General discussions about the GAFMPs provided the following suggestions that should be included when they are submitted to the Natural Resource Commission. The Committee agreed that a preamble should be placed in the GAFMPs to provide context, activities that should not be considered a nuisance, etc. Specific suggestions included...

- A sentence stating that the use of chemicals is not necessarily a nuisance activity. Reference agriculture GAFMPs. Include a list of what should be considered when using chemicals. A sentence like this should be used for all of the GAFMP areas.

- Providing a sentence that states that the mere removal of trees should not be considered a nuisance activity.
- Bill Cook's reasons to cut forests- regeneration, forest stand improvement, provide for timber products and ecological services. Cook believes that if the purpose of your cut does not include at least 2 of these reasons than you are not practicing good forest management.
- Frank suggested and the committee agreed that all of the statements in the GAFMPs should be stated as facts instead of what "should and should not" be done. Frank suggested a statement such as, "A person is using the GAFMPs if..." Kerry will compile all working group GAFMPs and ensure that they are stated as facts.
- The level of generality should be consistent among the GAFMPs
- A glossary for forestry terms and other words used in GAFMPs
- A statement should be included that states that if a landowner is not following the GAFMPs they are not necessarily creating a nuisance.

Chemicals Working Group

No members of the Chemicals working group were present but Lynne provided a brief update. Much of the regulatory language already exists and should be "referred" and re-stated or included in the document to be reviewed by the NRC. This practice should be used whenever possible, in order to reduce the size and complexity of the recommended GAFMPs. MDA has jurisdiction over Chemicals GAFMPs but DNR, MDA and DEQ need to identify how much and also discuss how strongly worded the forestry GAFMPs need to be. Lynne will set-up a meeting between the departments to discuss.

Removal of Vegetation Working Group

Erin McDonough discussed the draft GAFMPs that the Removal of Vegetation working group developed. The Committee discussed several issues about the GAFMPs including how detailed they have to be in terms of specifically identifying practices. Erin commented that the working group was unsure of how specific they needed to be. Steve Shine reminded the Committee that there is a difference between GAFMPs and best management practices (BMPs). GAFMPs should be considered the base that could be built into BMPs. Committee members agreed that, to start, the GAFMPs should be general and over time they can be made more specific. It was noted that the Right to Forest legislation mandates annual review of the forestry GAFMPs.

Peg Gale and Dan Keathley suggested that in writing the removal of vegetation GAFMPs include language about removing trees for regeneration purposes. Identifying the forest management practice and tying them back to forest stand regeneration. Use the management plan to develop goals of harvests in terms of regeneration. Different practices may need to be identified based on the stand.

Committee discussed the concept of "good neighbor practices." A definition of "good neighbor practices" as decided by Committee would serve as a lead into this section. Dan suggested that it should be stated that if you don't follow the practices that landowners are not "bad

neighbors.” Lynne’s understanding is that a purpose of the Right to Forest legislation is for landowners to understand that the activities they do on their property has an impact on their neighbors and the landscape. Working group will include a statement on good neighbor policy and how land decisions can impact neighbors and how land is interconnected.

Other comments provided by members included...

- stating that if an “approved” management plan is being followed than a nuisance cannot be claimed.
- GAFMPs should reference to standard silviculture texts (e.g. Smith or Daniel, Helms, & Baker or Nyland(?) or Hunter)
- use caution when using the word “normal”

Noise and Dust Working Group

Warren discussed Noise/Dust and Smoke working group GAFMPs that were sent to Committee members via email. The GAFMPs are based on sensitivity levels.

There was legislation regarding prescribed burns that was passed in 2005 and will take effect in 2007. Lynne will provide legislation to Committee members.

Visual Quality Management Working Group

George Berghorn was not present at the meeting. He has not provided a draft of the visual quality management GAFMPs for review by Committee. Susan Holben and Warren will get information from George and finish up draft of GAFMPs.

Committee suggested that the GAFMPs also address issues of visual quality other than just the removal of trees, including garbage, junk left behind, etc.

Warren provided the handout “Forest Management Practices That Can Enhance Visual Quality of Forest Treatment Areas” that he provided to George to include in draft GAFMPs. He discussed contents.

***ASSIGNMENT: All working groups should provide a final draft of their GAFMPs to Kerry (grayk@michigan.gov), for compilation for May 3 meeting.**

Public Comment – none

Forest, Mineral and Fire Management Budget

Lynne presented on the FMFM budget and provided a handout for Committee members of the presentation. Highlights of the presentation include:

- FY 2005-06 FMFM Appropriation- \$43,755,000. This does not mean that FMFM actually has this amount of money to spend. It is the maximum amount that the Michigan Legislature will allow the DNR to spend in that fiscal year.

- FMFM has one of the most complicated budgets in the DNR. Many of the funding sources are restricted use.
- Any revenue on tax reverted lands goes into the Forest Development Fund.
- Forest Development Fund dollars are restricted.
- Forest Recreation needs funding. Lynne hopes that the FMAC will take funding Forest Recreation as one of its tasks. It is hard to levy user fees for many of these areas because there is not a single point of entry like State Parks.

Resume Commercial Forests and Public Access Discussion - Tabled

Bill Cook's Announcement

The FMAC members are invited to attend the Michigan Society of Foresters legislative tour on May 17. The tour will be of sites in Eaton County demonstrating the affects of private forest management (both well managed and not managed areas).

New Business

A. Adding members to FMAC

Lynne stated that there are several groups interested in joining the FMAC. They will need to fill slot that John Fowler occupied. If FMAC members believe that there is a need to increase the FMAC membership to include other groups represented, let Lynne know. It will be the decision of the DNR Director as to whether the FMAC will increase membership.

B. State Forest Plan

To meet Certification requirement the DNR is developing a State Forest Plan. It must be completed by September. There will be a public comment period in June. The FMAC members will receive a copy of the draft and will be able to provide comment on the Plan for approximately one month (June-July). As soon as the draft becomes available it will be sent to members.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, May 3 from 1pm to 4pm at the MUCC office (2101 Wood St, Lansing)

Suggested agenda items for next meeting:

- Continue with GAFMP working group discussions ; Dr. John Witter, UM Professor- presentation on Forest Ecology and Ecology Issues impacting MI's forests (confirmed); resume discussion on forest land access with Sam Washington; choose dates and locations for future FMAC meetings; identify date for Field Trip
- Provide any other agenda items to Kerry Gray (517-241-1833 or grayk@michigan.gov)

Upcoming meetings: June 7 from 1pm-4pm (Tentative Location: MUCC office – Lansing)

Meeting adjourned at 4:30 pm.

Submitted by Kerry Gray